

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

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INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJECT: DECEMBER 8 REFERENDUM IN NORTHERN GREECE

REF: A) THESSALONIKI 815 B) ATHENS 8729

1. SUMMARY: VOTING TOOK PLACE IN RELAXED ATMOSPHERE THROUGHOUT NORTHERN GREECE DECEMBER 8 WITH FINAL RESULTS SHOWING 66.5 PERCENT FAVORING PRESIDENTIAL DEMOCRACY AND 33.5 PERCENT FOR MONARCHY. AS GENERALLY PREDICTED, CONSERVATIVE ORIENTATION HERE RESULTED IN SLIGHTLY HIGHER ROYALIST VOTE THAN OVERALL 30.8 PERCENT FOR ENTIRE COUNTRY, AND AVERAGE PERCENTAGE VOTE FOR KING BY NOMOS, RATHER THAN POPULATION, WAS 36.4 PERCENT IN NORTHERN GREECE. END SUMMARY.

2. ANALYSIS OF VOTE IN NORTHERN GREECE SHOWS LEAST SUPPORT FOR KING IN LARGEST CITIES, INCLUDING THESSALONIKI, KAVALA AND VERIA. (CENTRAL "A" DISTRICT IN THESSALONIKI RECORDED LOWEST ROYALIST VOTE IN NORTHERN GREECE, WITH 20 PERCENT, FOLLOWED BY 26 PERCENT IN KAVALA AND 28.2 PERCENT IN VERIA.) BY CONTRAST, HIGHEST ROYALIST VOTE OCCURRED IN OUTLYING RURAL AND FRONTIER AREAS OF WESTERN MACEDONIA AND THRACE. ONE NOMOS, RODHOPI, EVEN

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SHOWED SLIGHT MARGIN OF 50.5 PERCENT FOR KING,

REFLECTING CONSERVATIVE SENTIMENTS OF MOSLEM COMMUNITY
IN XANTHI AND KOMOTINI.

3. BALLOTING WAS ORDERLY AND NORMAL SUNDAY ACTIVITIES
WERE OBSERVED IN PROGRESS DURING DRIVE THROUGH VILLAGES
AND CITIES BETWEEN THESSALONIKI AND VOLOS. ANNOUNCEMENT
OF RESULTS LATE DECEMBER 8 WAS GREETED LOCALLY WITH
LIMITED CELEBRATIONS AND SMALL GATHERING AT ANTI-ROYALIST
HEADQUARTERS, BUT NO OUTPOURING COMPARABLE TO NOVEMBER 17.

4. HOWEVER, "THESSALONIKI" OF DECEMBER 9 NOTES ONE
INCIDENT AT KSILOHORIO VILLAGE OUTSIDE THESSALONIKI
WHERE ALLEGED ROYALIST VOTERS INVADED POLLING STATION
AND SCUFFLED WITH PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY OBSERVERS,
RESULTING IN SIX INJURIES, THREE REPORTEDLY SERIOUS.
ONE PASOK-"DEMOCRATIKI AMINA" FIGURE, SOTERIOS DEDES,
WAS INJURED IN FRACAS.

5. MINOR INCIDENTS WERE ALSO REPORTED DURING LAST MINUTE
CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES BY PRO-CHINESE REVOLUTIONARY
COMMUNIST PARTY OF GREECE (EKKE). FOURTEEN OF LATTER
WERE ARRESTED PAINTING SLOGANS ON BUILDINGS DECEMBER 7
AND TURNED OVER TO LOCAL ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR TRIAL IN
JANUARY. EKKE ALSO PROTESTING SLOGAN "DEATH TO KARAMANLIS
AND KING" WHICH ALLEGEDLY PAINTED BY "FASCISTS" TO
DISCREDIT EKKE.

6. DESPITE FEW INCIDENTS NOTED ABOVE, GENERAL ATMOSPHERE
HERE IS SATISFACTION WITH RESULT OF REFERENDUM AND
RELIEF THAT VOTE TOOK PLACE UNDER PEACEFUL CONDITIONS.
FOR MANY, OUTCOME WAS FOREGONE CONCLUSION AND PUBLICATION
OF RESULTS WAS APPARENT ANTICLIMAX.
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